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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PINT](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [IZ](#) [MARR](#)
SUBJECT: NINEWA: TAL AFAR AND RABIYA CITY COUNCILS SEARCHING FOR
ANSWERS TO BASIC SERVICES AND SECURITY

REF: MOSUL 30

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REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) The city councils of the west Ninewa towns of Tal Afar and Rabiya seek to improve security and basic services to their communities. While both councils are pleased with improved security, they realized more work would need to be done to shore up Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in number and training to ensure that peace would prevail. Both city councils claim they had little help from the provincial and central governments, especially in the areas of development and reconstruction. Tal Afar wants to repair bridges and clean up the city, while Rabiya seeks new schools and a hospital. The city councils have their problems -- the former mayor of Rabiya was just arrested for corruption, and the Tal Afar city council has motivation problems -- but both entities show signs of progress. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) PRT PolOff and MNF-N met with members of the Tal Afar City Council on March 15, and members of the Rabiya City Council on March 16.

SECURITY ISSUES

¶3. (C) The city councils of Tal Afar and Rabiya expressed cautious optimism over the state of security in their respective cities. While there had been improvements in coordination with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Coalition Forces (CF), the general sense from the meetings was that more needed to be done to ensure security improved over the months ahead. Tal Afar Mayor Najim Al Jubouri (reftel) and city council member Mohammed Sadiq Younis spoke of several recent successes by the ISF with capturing insurgents, locating improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and establishing additional checkpoints on roads coming into Tal Afar. Col Abdul Aziz Ahmed, Iraqi Army (IA) Brigade Chief of Statt, asked for more help from civilians to strengthen intelligence to capture insurgents in the area. The IA was doing a better job of how it was conducting nighttime raids on homes and improving treatment of its detainees, he said.

Executive Office of the Police Force Col Mahmood said his forces were increasing patrols, and that 75 percent of Iraqi Police (IP) missions were joint operations with CF and IA. Al Jubouri said the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in Baghdad had recently approved hiring additional officers and the construction of new IP stations. He was working with IP officials to improve representation of Sunnis and Shias (the current breakdown was about 70 percent Sunni to Shia, roughly the same as the Tal Afar's population). He said the city would consider hiring civilians and military that served during the former regime. There were currently 1,707 IP, with 37 more on the way in the first week of April.

¶4. (C) On a visit with city council members of Rabiya, Deputy Mayor Jassam Mohammed said the biggest frustration was the recent redeployment of 150 IP from Rabiya to other parts of the province. The IP was redeployed because it was believed there were "too many" officers in the city that needed to be used elsewhere. He said the city was looking to hire more IP, as well as beef up the border patrol. Mohammed said an increase in IEDs planted on roads leading into the city might have been a result of the fewer IPs and IP stations outside of Rabiya. More officers and checkpoints were needed to better security on the roads, he said. IP station chief Col Ahwad said the IP had 16 total trucks for patrols but that four were in need of repairs. He was hoping for more cooperation from the GOI and provincial government on the issue.

RULE OF LAW

¶5. (C) Executive Officer of the Tal Afar Police Force Col Mahmood said the IP was working with lawyers in the area to shore up criminal investigation procedures. He claimed Tal Afar's two judges refused to help because they felt the effort was "beneath them." Mahmood said unless there was more intervention by Ninewa Chief Judge Faisal Hadeed to get Tal Afar's judges involved, the IP would continue training with

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lawyers. Younis said training of interrogators was currently being done with help from CF, and each year they trained approximately 50 to 60 of them. The training was helping IP conduct better interrogations and searches, and improving human rights. He claimed a "no tolerance" policy for abuses, and that if a soldier or officer were found to have disrespected a female, for example, he would be fired immediately.

BASIC SERVICES AND RECONSTRUCTION

¶6. (C) Tal Afar members said their biggest frustration was that 37 million dollars promised them by the GOI had not yet made its way to the city (NOTE: This money was promised by PM Ja'afari a year ago). Al Jubouri asked for assistance from the provincial government to locate the funds from the GOI. On reconstruction projects, he said the city was working on efforts to get contracting approval from the GOI to build small bridges in town, repair the sewer system, and provide furniture and learning materials to schools. Regarding fuel, he has been working on efforts with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Dohuk to bring more and cheaper petrol and cooking gas to Tal Afar. In Rabiya Deputy Mayor Mohammed said no construction was currently being done in the city and outlying villages. Rabiya needed a hospital since it was relying on four small clinics not equipped to handle demand, he said. City Councilmember Sheikh Hassan Faris believed residents were forced to travel to Mosul and Tal Afar hospitals for everything from serious accidents to births, which was a burden on Rabiya's 100,000 inhabitants. Mohammed said construction of school buildings was necessary since most were made of mud and wood. Schools were also overcrowded, he said, so more would need to be built.

REPARATIONS FOR DAMAGES

¶7. (C) Members of the Tal Afar City Council and Mayor Al Jubouri were concerned they did not have enough funding to cover all claims filed to the city regarding damages sustained during counterinsurgency operations from last September. Al Jubouri said the city was given four million dollars to settle claims, but that the city would probably need more money from the GOI, possibly around 10 million dollars, since the current amount of money would only help settle about 10 percent of the cases. Al Jubouri said the city had received 7,500 claims so far, some stemming back to April 2004. Cases of missing vehicles, stolen or broken furniture, and the injured or killed made up the majority of the claims, he said.

COMMENT

¶8. (C) It was good to see city governments in two strategically important areas of western Ninewa functioning, but we should note that both city councils are not without their problems. In Rabiya, city council members said the former mayor had just been arrested in Mosul after fleeing for allegations of corruption. A new mayor had been appointed but he was not present during our informal meeting. Tal Afar has its own problems as well. According to Mayor Al Jubouri members are reluctant to meet regularly. Sheikh Tawfiq, a provincial councilmember and Tal Afar resident, got word of this and apparently forced the city council to get together, claimed Al Jubouri. Although the Tal Afar meeting started strongly, covering issues of security and reconstruction, it quickly digressed into requests for "respect education" of the IP -- to recognize public officials and politicians so they are not pulled over indiscriminately at police checkpoints -- and for weapons permits for council members. While these issues raise questions regarding the sustainability of the local governments, the leaders we spoke to (at least when on message) seem concerned about finding solutions to real problems.

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